

VIDEO POKER GAME

Cross-reference to Related Application

This application is based on Provisional Application, Serial No. 60/462,360, filed April 11, 2003, entitled "Video Poker Game."

This invention relates primarily to video poker games, and more particularly to video poker games in which the cards that are discarded from the initial hand are used in a second hand.

Background of the Invention

Video poker that is played on an electronic video poker gaming machine is designed to replicate the play of a hand of poker. Typically, the player is not playing against any other player's hands or against a dealer's hand; the player is simply attempting to achieve the highest ranking poker hand possible from the cards displayed to the player. The higher the ranking of the poker hand achieved by the player, the greater the player's winnings based on the number of coins, tokens or credits wagered by the player.

1 Typically, a payout schedule is posted on the gaming machine to
2 advise the player of the payoffs available for certain winning
3 card combinations.

4 The forerunner of all electronic video poker gaming machines
5 is the video Draw Poker machine that deals cards from a standard
6 fifty-two card poker deck and displays a single five card hand to
7 the player. The player then selects which of the five cards he
8 wishes to hold (or discard depending on the format of the gaming
9 machine). The draw poker machine then displays replacement cards
10 for the cards the player has discarded. The player wins or loses
11 based on conventional poker hand rankings for the resulting five
12 card hand. In video Draw Poker, the conventional poker hand
13 rankings that are winning combinations are a Royal Flush, a
14 Straight Flush, a Four of a Kind, a Full House, a Flush, a
15 Straight, a Three of a Kind, a Two Pair and a Pair of Jacks or
16 Better. A payout table is established based on the number of
17 coins wagered by the player and the type of poker hand achieved.

18 The classic draw poker machine has been modified to use Jokers
19 as wild cards or to use Deuces (or even other cards) as wild

1 cards. "Jokers Wild" and "Deuces Wild" draw poker still display to
2 the player a single five card hand and allow the player to discard
3 unwanted cards and receive replacement cards. The payout table is
4 modified to recognize the differing odds for achieving various
5 poker hands when wild cards are involved. Furthermore, different
6 poker hand rankings are used in the pay table to recognize
7 different winning combinations that can be achieved using wild
8 cards.

9 There are many poker formats used in video poker. The poker
10 formats can be used in both draw poker games and stud poker games.
11 These poker game formats include Jacks (or even Tens) or Better
12 Draw Poker, Bonus Poker, Double Bonus Poker, Double Double Bonus
13 Poker, Super Double Bonus Poker, Triple Bonus Poker, Deuces Wild
14 Poker, Jokers Wild Poker, Deuces and Jokers Wild Poker, etc. Many
15 electronic video poker gaming machines are provided with a menu so
16 that the player can indicate his choice of the poker game format
17 that the player wishes to play and the player then makes his wager
18 based on upon that choice of poker game format. Each poker format
19 has its own pay table associated therewith and each poker format

1 can be adapted to both video stud poker games and video draw poker
2 games.

3 It is an object of the present invention to provide an
4 electronic video poker game that provides the player with two
5 hands of draw poker -- each hand having its own wager allocated
6 thereto. The discards from the first hand are used as the starting
7 cards for the second hand.

8 It is a feature of the present invention to provide a draw
9 poker game with an initial first hand and a second hand. The
10 player makes a first wager that applies to the first hand and the
11 player makes a second wager that applies to the second hand. An
12 initial first hand is displayed to the player. The player selects
13 which cards to discard from the first hand and receives
14 replacement cards for the discarded cards to form a final first
15 hand. The discarded cards are used as the starting cards in the
16 second hand and additional cards are displayed to the second hand
17 to form a final second hand. Winning card combinations in the
18 first hand and the second hand receives awards based on a pay
19 table and the amount wagered by the player on each hand.

It is an advantage of the present invention that the player is provided with multiple hands and multiple chances to win awards.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from a consideration of the following detailed description.

Summary of the Invention

The game of the present invention is a modification to a conventional video poker game. The player makes a wager for a first hand and a wager for a second hand and the player then has displayed to him an initial first hand. Alternatively, the player may make only a single wager at the start of the play of the hand, which wager will apply to both hands and is allocated between both hands. The player selects which cards to hold and the unheld cards are discarded from the first hand and placed as the starting cards in the second hand.

Replacement cards are displayed into the first hand to create a final first hand. Additional cards are displayed into the second hand to create a final second hand. The poker hand ranking

1 of each hand is determined and the player receives a payout for
2 any winning hand combination that is achieved in the final first
3 hand and in the final second hand. The amount of the payout is
4 based on a pay table and the amount wagered by the player.

6 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

7 Figure 1 shows a representative electronic video gaming
8 machine of the present invention including a typical screen
9 display used in the method of play of the present invention after
10 the initial deal of the cards.

11 Figure 2 shows a representative electronic video gaming
12 machine of the present invention including a typical screen
13 display used in the method of play of the present invention after
14 the draw step and the dealing of replacement and additional cards.

16 **Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

17 The method of the present invention can be applied to any
18 poker format used for video draw poker. Figure 1 shows generally

1 at 10 a typical electronic video gaming machine that is configured
2 to provide to the player the method of the present invention. The
3 electronic video gaming machine 10 includes a conventional coin
4 head 50 into which the player can insert coins or gaming tokens
5 and a slot 52 which leads to a conventional bill acceptor mounted
6 on the interior of the gaming machine and into which the player
7 can insert paper currency. The use of coins, tokens or paper
8 currency is the mechanism by which the player wagers on the poker
9 hands the player wishes to play. As is also conventional in
10 electronic video gaming machines, a credit meter display 22 is
11 provided to show the amount of credits that the player has accrued
12 on the gaming machine 10 -- either by inserting coins, tokens or
13 paper currency or from winning plays achieved by the player.
14 Whenever the player makes a wager, the amount of the wager is
15 decremented from the credit meter display 22. Whenever the player
16 achieves a winning play during the play of the game, the amount of
17 the winning play is incremented on the credit meter display 22.

18 A conventional payout hopper is also located on the interior
19 of the gaming machine and is used to dispense coins or tokens to

1 the player into a payout tray 56 when the player wishes to collect
2 any winning amounts the player has accrued. Other suitable and
3 conventional payout mechanisms can be used, such as a ticket
4 printer or other cashless payout devices.

5 The gaming machine 10 also includes a video screen display 20
6 of any suitable type upon which representations of playing cards
7 are displayed. As shown in Figure 1, an initial first hand 60 is
8 shown. The first hand would preferably have five card locations
9 preferably from left to right in a horizontal row, although other
10 manners of displaying the first hand can be used. The video
11 screen display 20 also contains a location at which the amount
12 wagered on the hand is shown, for example, "Bet per Hand" 24.

13 A button panel 40 is also provided on the gaming machine 10
14 and the buttons mounted on the button panel 40 are used by the
15 player to control the operation of the gaming machine 10. Any
16 suitable configuration of the buttons on the button panel can be
17 used and, alternatively, conventional touch screen technology can
18 be used in place of any or all of the buttons mounted on the
19 button panel.

1 A typical button arrangement is shown on the button panel 30
2 in Figure 1. A "BET ONE" button 42 is provided to allow the
3 player to wager one credit at a time. A "BET MAX" button 44 is
4 provided to allow the player to wager the maximum amount of
5 credits permitted by the configuration of the gaming machine 10.
6 Any number of credits can be set as the maximum amount that it is
7 possible to wager on each hand and, typically, five credits will
8 be the maximum number of credits for any particular hand.
9 Alternatively, a BET location 26 and a BET MAX location 28 can be
10 provided on the video screen 20 to allow the player to wager by
11 using conventional touch screen technology.

12 A conventional "DEAL/DRAW" button 46 is also provided on the
13 button panel 40 which is used by the player to activate the
14 initial deal of the cards at the deal stage of the method of play
15 or the dealing of replacement cards at the draw stage of the
16 method of play as is appropriate. Similarly, a DEAL/DRAW location
17 47 can be provided on the video screen 20 to allow the player to
18 effect either the deal step or the draw step by using conventional
19 touch screen technology.

1 The button panel 40 is also provided with five "CARD" buttons
2 48A, 48B, 48C, 48D and 48E associated with each horizontal card
3 location on the video screen display: card button 48A is
4 associated with the left most card location, card button 48B is
5 associated with the second from the left card location, card
6 button 48C is associated with the middle card location, card
7 button 48D is associated with the second from the right card
8 location and card button 48E is associated with the right most
9 card location. Each card button is preferably aligned below the
10 card locations so that the player can easily associate the
11 appropriate card button with the appropriate card location.

12 The method of play of the present invention will now be
13 described. After the player has inserted an appropriate amount of
14 coins, tokens or paper currency to add a sufficient amount of
15 credits on the credit display meter 22, the player makes his
16 initial wager. The player may press the BET ONE button 42 one or
17 more times to bet in single increments or the player may merely
18 press the "BET MAX" button 44 and the maximum number of credits
19 are applied, for example, ten credits would be wagered. The

1 player can also use the touch screen locations to make his wager
2 as described above.

3 The preferred embodiment of the present invention is played
4 using a standard fifty-two card deck of playing cards. The player
5 makes two wagers to participate in the method of play with the
6 first wager being allocated to an initial first hand and the second
7 wager being allocated to a second hand. These wagers may be of
8 the same amount or of different amounts.

9 Alternatively, the player may only make one wager which is
10 applied to the both of the hands and is allocated between both
11 hands. For example, if the player makes a single wager of ten
12 credits, each hand will be treated as if there was a five credit
13 wager on that hand.

14 Another alternative involves the player making only one wager
15 which is applied to the both of the hands. For example, if the
16 player makes a single wager of five credits, each hand will be
17 treated as if there was a five credit wager on that hand. Any
18 suitable pay table may be used in the event the player only makes
19 one wager which is applied to both of the hands.

1 The first five card hand 60 shown in Figure 1 is displayed to
2 the player. For example, the player may be dealt the Jack of
3 Diamonds, Jack of Spades, Ace of Spades, Seven of Diamonds and
4 Four of Clubs.

5 The player then decides which cards he wishes to hold from
6 HAND 60. For example as shown in Figure 1, the player would
7 probably hold the Jack of Diamonds and the Jack of Spades.

8 As shown in Figure 2, the discarded cards are displayed into
9 the second hand 70 and become the starting cards for the second
10 hand which now has an Ace of Spades, Seven of Diamonds and Four of
11 Clubs.

12 After the player has made the selection of which cards the
13 player wishes to hold, if any, replacement cards are displayed for
14 the discarded cards. In Figure 2, final first hand 61 shows the
15 replacement cards that have been added to the held cards -- the
16 Ace of Hearts, Seven of Hearts and Jack of Hearts.

17 The replacement cards are dealt from the depleted forty-seven
18 card deck which comprises the original fifty-two card deck minus
19 the five initially dealt cards. The player is paid for any

1 winning poker hand ranking achieved in final first hand 61 based
2 on a pay table as is conventional in video poker.

3 For example, as shown in Figure 2, the player has improved his
4 hand after the draw step and final first hand 61 comprises a
5 Three-of-a-Kind. This would be a winning poker hand ranking using
6 a conventional Draw Poker game format. Table 1 shows a suitable
7 pay table that can be used for a Draw Poker game format.

8

JACKS OR BETTER DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS WAGERED				
POKER HAND RANKING	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	250	500	750	1000	4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	50	100	150	200	250
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	25	50	75	100	125
FULL HOUSE	8	16	24	32	40
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	20
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

9

TABLE 1.

1 Assuming the player wagered five credits on the hand, the
2 player would be awarded fifteen credits for achieving a Three-of-
3 a-Kind.

4 The second hand 70 is now completed by displaying additional
5 cards into second hand 70 so that this hand now has five cards.
6 These additional cards are dealt from the depleted card deck which
7 comprises the original fifty-two card deck minus the five
8 initially dealt cards and minus whatever replacement cards were
9 displayed into the final first hand 61. The player is paid for
10 any winning poker hand ranking achieved in final second hand 70
11 based on a pay table as is conventional in video poker.

12 For example, as shown in Figure 2, the player has displayed
13 into the second hand 70 as additional cards the Four of Hearts and
14 the Seven of Clubs which results in a final second hand having a
15 poker hand ranking of Two Pair.

16 This would be a winning poker hand ranking using a
17 conventional Draw Poker game format. Using Table 1 as a suitable
18 pay table the player would receive a payout of ten credits if the
19 second wager was five credits.

1 While the example of the method of play described above is
2 shown in conjunction with a regular Draw Poker format, the method
3 of play of the present invention can also be applied to any other
4 variation of draw poker, such as Tens or Better Draw Poker, Bonus
5 Poker, Double Bonus Poker, Double Double Bonus Poker, Super Double
6 Bonus Poker, Triple Bonus Poker, Deuces Wild Poker, Jokers Wild
7 Poker, Deuces and Jokers Wild Poker, etc. Each of these video
8 poker variations uses various arrangements of poker hand rankings
9 as winning combinations. In the preferred embodiment of the
10 present invention, a standard fifty-two card deck of playing cards
11 is used. One or more cards may also be designated as wild cards
12 for the various wild card poker formats and, additionally, one or
13 more Jokers may be added to the deck of cards and the Jokers may
14 then be used as wild cards for the Joker poker formats.

15 The method of play of the present invention may be applied to
16 other poker variations such as three card poker, four card poker,
17 six card poker, seven card poker or an even higher number of cards
18 in a poker hand. Winning hand combinations are provided for each
19 type of poker hand and a suitable pay table is presented to the

1 player depending on how many cards will be in the final hand.

2 Any suitable pay table may be used and would be associated
3 with the poker format being used by the player. As is known to
4 those skilled in the art, pay tables are calculated based on the
5 probability of the various winning card combinations occurring and
6 the desired overall game return to be offered by the gaming
7 establishment to the player.

8 While the invention has been illustrated with respect to
9 several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments should be
10 considered as illustrative rather than limiting. Various
11 modifications and additions may be made and will be apparent to
12 those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the invention should not
13 be limited by the foregoing description, but rather should be
14 defined only by the following claims.